

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Office of the Spokesman**

**For Immediate Release
April 15, 2008
As Delivered
2008/284**

REMARKS

**Opening Remarks by Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice
Before the House Armed Services Committee
April 15, 2008
Washington, D.C.**

(10:00 p.m. EDT)

SECRETARY RICE: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Ranking Member, thank you very much. I would very much like to thank this Committee for the opportunity to testify on this extremely important issue and to do so with my colleague and friend, Secretary Bob Gates.

I believe that you have correctly identified the degree to which the challenges of the 21st century require both change within individual departments of our national security apparatus and better and stronger means for interagency action and coordination. In fact, I believe that the way that we have come to think about the world that we face is that there are no longer neat categories between war and peace.

More often, we are facing a continuum between war and peace; countries with which we are not at war, but which we must make capable of waging counterterrorism operations, countries that have emerged from war but are not yet in a position in which they are stable and in which we are still helping them to fight terrorists in their midst or insurgencies in their midst. And this is why the ability of the Department of State and the Department of Defense to work together in these environments is so crucial to our success.

In many cases, we are engaging the fact that the threats to us come perhaps more from within states than between states. Indeed, we learned on September 11th that the most extreme threat to the United States came, indeed, from a failed state, Afghanistan. And that has changed significantly the security environment in which we act. As I said, this has required great changes in the way that we think about the departments and it requires different thinking about the relationship between our departments and the ability to coordinate them.

Let me note that the Department of State -- and I thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, for your remarks about the efforts that we're making in the Department of State to transform our Department -- it has required us to think of ourselves as more expeditionary. It has required us to think of ourselves as a national security agency and President Bush has designated us as such. It requires us to work increasingly outside of capitals, whether in places in which there is growing population or, more likely, in places in which there are even ungoverned spaces and where the work can be quite dangerous.

It has required us to redeploy some 300 officers out of Europe into places of greater need, to change our assignment processes to be able to take on higher priority tasks, whether they be in Iraq or Afghanistan or in Pakistan. And we are requesting, in this year's 2009 budget from the President, increases to both the Foreign Service and to USAID, 1,100 new Foreign Service Officers, and 300 new USAID officers. And this reflects the fact that the effort to take the peace dividend in the 1990s did not only cut into our military forces, but it, in effect, cut into our civilian capacity as well. There was a period in the 1990s when we were not keeping pace, even close to keeping pace with attrition. And so we have a Foreign Service of -- with professional offices of just under 6,500. I think Bob Gates has said somewhere near the number of people -- is it military bands or Pentagon lawyers, Bob? But it is, indeed, a very --

SECRETARY GATES: A lot more lawyers.

SECRETARY RICE: A lot more lawyers than that. But it is, indeed, a very small professional force. USAID has dropped from highs in the 1980s of nearly 5,000 officers to 1,100 officers currently. And so we have some significant rebuilding of our civilian professional corps to do.

We have also changed the way that we train our Foreign Service Officers for nontraditional roles. We have increased the number of political officers serving with military commands. And we have pushed the POLADs, as they're called, down to ever lower levels of command to help provide civilian expertise to commanders.

I might just mention three points that have been raised in the initial comments. The first is that we have, in the foreign assistance reform that we have undertaken, tried to better integrate the foreign assistance dollars that the United States of America is providing to countries by a more integrated foreign assistance process that is led by a new Director of Foreign Assistance who is simultaneously the head of USAID. Roughly, 80 percent of all foreign assistance is provided by those two agencies. But in the process that we have to construct the foreign assistance budget, we have included the Department of Defense in that -- in the construction of that budget from the very first meetings all the way up to the management review of budget requests that I chair at the end of the process before the submission of the budget to the Office of Management and Budget and ultimately to the Congress.

And so we have tried by including Defense Department and indeed Joint Staff representatives in our process to begin to take account of the needs of military commanders of the need to build partner capacity in our overall foreign assistance approach.

Two other major initiatives that we have undertaken is one to try and deal with the problems of stabilization. We faced this problem in the Balkans. We faced it again in Afghanistan. We faced it again in Iraq. And I think it is fair to say that in none of those cases did we have really the right answer in terms of the civilian component of stabilization. We simply didn't have a civilian institution that could take on the task of providing stabilization in the wake of war or civil war.

As a result, I would be the first to say that our military did take on more tasks than perhaps would have been preferred, and we began some work when I was still National Security Advisor to think through how we might build a civilian institution that would be -- would be up to the task. We have, as a result, a Civilian Stabilization Initiative. This initiative would create a rapid

civilian response capacity for use in stabilization and reconstruction environments. It could be deployed alongside the military with international partners or on its own.

The Civilian Stabilization Initiative consists of three kinds of civilian responders: an active response corps of diplomats and interagency federal employees who are selected and trained for this capability; a standby response corps of federal employees; and finally, a civilian reserve corps of private sector, local government and civil society experts with specialized skill sets.

And I might especially underscore the importance of this last component, because it is never going to be possible to keep within the environs of the State Department, or really even government agencies, the full range of expertise that one needs in state building; for instance, city planners or justice experts or police training experts. And so this civilian component, to be able to draw on the broader national community of experts, Americans who might wish to volunteer to go to a place like Afghanistan or Haiti or Liberia to help in state building, we think is an important innovation. The President talked about this in his State of the Union one year ago, and we are now ready to put that capacity into place. We have requested \$248.6 million in the President's foreign assistance budget for the construction of that corps.

If I may, let me just mention two other elements of our efforts to meet these new challenges. Secretary Gates has talked about the 1206 authorities. We believe at State that this additional military assistance that has become available under Section 1206 of the National Defense Authorization Act has proven invaluable. We fully support this and other complementary foreign assistance authorities within the jurisdiction of this Committee, most notably the extension and expansion of 1206 and 1207 authorities.

In 1206, we have provided a dual key approach of delivering resources for emergent short-term military assistance needs and counterterrorism activities. Let me underscore that this is not a substitute for more robust funding for security assistance accounts, but we strongly advocate continuing these important contingency authorities and they are the additional tools that we need to meet emergent exigent problems that very often emerge out of budget cycle. Secretary Gates mentioned the Lebanon situation. I think had the United States not been able to respond to the needs of the Lebanese armed forces for immediate military assistance in fighting the al-Qaida-linked terrorists in the Nahr El Bared refugee camp, we might have seen a very different outcome. In the case that we were able to respond, we saw a Lebanese army and a Lebanese government -- democratically elected government -- able to respond to that exigency.

We have created many of these tools as tools that came out of necessity. It is true that it would be very good to have some of these put into more permanent authorities. But let me just say that I'm a firm believer that it is often out of exigent circumstances, out of efforts to respond to new contingencies, out of efforts of this kind that we build our best capacity and that we build our best institutions. I'm very much of the view that it is fine to think of trying to plan for the reconstruction of the interagency -- of the interagency process.

But really, we have gone a long way to creating new tools of interagency coordination. They may well have been born of necessity. They may well have been ad hoc in character at first. But whether it was the 1206 authorities or the Civilian Response Corps or the work that we've done together in PRTs, I think that the history will look back on this time as a time in which necessity was, indeed, the mother of invention. It is often the case that that which is invented in response

to new and real on-the-ground contingencies turn out to be the best institutions for the future.
Thank you very much.